

<https://doi.org/10.22126/tale.2023.2849>

Document Type: Research Paper

## Novice and Experienced EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Obstacles in Implementing Task-Based Language Teaching in SHAD Platform

<sup>1</sup>Seyyed Dariush Ahmadi<sup>1</sup>, Sadegh Heidari<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran. Email: [sdariush.ahmadi@gmail.com](mailto:sdariush.ahmadi@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>M.A student of English Language Teaching, Islamic Azad University, Hamadan, Iran. Email: [simahmadiw336@gmail.com](mailto:simahmadiw336@gmail.com)

Received: July 21, 2023; Accepted: September 25, 2023

### Abstract

The present study attempted to investigate novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching using SHAD platform in Iran. Forty male and female English teachers (20 Novice and 20 Experienced) teaching at Language institutes in Kermanshah, Iran, participated in this study. They were conveniently sampled. A mixed-method design, benefiting from a TBLT questionnaire and interview sessions, was used to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards the SHAD platform in online classes regarding the implementation of task-based language teaching in online classes. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the questionnaire to probe novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in these classes. The participants also answered interview questions to gain insights into the SHAD platform in online classes. The responses were analyzed qualitatively to determine the premier goal of this study. The findings indicated that participants generally had positive viewpoints regarding using computers, which they believed would help them work more effectively with their students. They also had higher learning goals. EFL teachers and students had positive attitudes towards the SHAD platform as they believed the SHAD platform constitutes a more relaxed and stress-free atmosphere. Hopefully, the findings will assist educational teachers, administrators, and academicians better understanding the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in online SHAD classes.

### Keywords:

Teachers'  
Perceptions,  
Inhibitors, Task-  
Based Language  
Teaching,  
Online

\*Corresponding Author: Seyyed Dariush Ahmadi

Email: [sdariush.ahmadi@gmail.com](mailto:sdariush.ahmadi@gmail.com)

Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities,  
Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran.



© The Author(s).

## Introduction

Today, people worldwide use technologies and the Internet almost anywhere and anytime. The young generation, the next generation (Hazaea & Alzubi, 2016), uses technology as their most familiar item (Naseri & Motallebzadeh, 2016). The new generation is more engaged and constantly connected to the net. There has been a change in how children gather, accept, and retain information. The main positive influence of social networks has been connection and interaction among their members and the exchange and sharing of information, knowledge, and ideas. Students can increase their creativity and productivity through these networks and learn to work in a group and in society. They can form groups to help each other solve problems. This can be related to learning a second language.

The use of online education in teaching English is broadly understood to encompass an innovative application of methods, tools, materials, devices, systems, and strategies directly relevant to English language teaching and lead to achieving the desired goals. Thus, while technology is now generally accepted as an essential educational tool across a range of teaching and learning contexts, it is particularly true of English language teaching since it affords several potential opportunities to enhance both the content and delivery of the pedagogies typically associated with traditional English language instruction (Obari & Lambacher, 2015).

Therefore, online education in English language teaching has become indispensable. Besides, in EFL educational systems, learning and teaching a foreign language is very significant since it provides chances to interact with many people around the globe. Teaching a foreign language requires different methods and approaches. One is the task-based approach, which has received increasing interest recently (Ellis, 2003). Many language educators have accepted task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as a practical approach due to the significant focus on developing learners' ability to use the language appropriately in context (Erlam & Tolosa, 2022). According to Moore (2018), TBLT has brought the most significant change to the practice of English language teaching. Therefore, many educational and language institutions have adopted this approach into their ELT practices. Although TBLT has been widely advocated by many applied linguists and English language teachers, TBLT implementation in English as Foreign Language (EFL) contexts has encountered several difficulties.

Reviewing the literature suggests that one of the reasons for the unsuccessful implementation of TBLT may be the neglect of novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning. Moreover, there are some inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching. Various inhibitors related to teachers, students, the learning environment, and materials might negatively affect language teaching and learning. Harris (2018) has identified three inhibitors of unsuccessful implementation of task-based language teaching: a) institutional conditions such as materials, equipment, class size, the mix of students in the classroom, and hours of instruction; b) students' inhibitors such as prior knowledge, intention to learn, motivation, interest, and attention; and c) the teachers themselves, such as teachers' knowledge, experience, pedagogy and commitment. Among many components related to teachers' implementation of innovation, language proficiency is a significant component in the subject knowledge of language teaching. Insufficient language proficiency may lead to anxiety about using the target language as a medium of instruction. In addition to inhibitors relating to teachers

themselves, other inhibitors affecting teachers' implementation of innovation also exist. Norris (2009) indicates that large class sizes, minimum contact hours, non-interactiveness of students, exam-driven learning, and other impediments are regularly cited as justification for not engaging in the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes.

The field of foreign language teaching has undergone many fluctuations and shifts over time. For many years, EFL teachers were concerned with teaching issues, mainly based on enhancing the target language's grammar. Later, they shifted their attention from relying on traditional approaches to teaching to new methods enabling learners to practice the language. So great importance was given to the communicative approaches and syllabi within the framework of teaching English as a foreign Language. Hence, using real language in the classroom has greatly interested teachers recently. The significant challenges of EFL learners are the lack of performance and their disabilities in communicating and discussing in the target language as they do in their native language. Moreover, they face many difficulties associated with classroom communication and interaction.

As a result, many investigations have been done to determine what may help learners develop their ability to communicate competently in their classes. Moreover, constant research was conducted on what may allow students to interact effectively during class. One way of doing this is through using classroom tasks and activities.

Additionally, Iranian students have difficulty learning English, communicating outside of the class environment, and doing some activities in English. As English is a foreign language and students are not exposed to it in real-life situations in Iran, the teachers should design some activities and tasks similar to real contexts that foster students' motivation and interest and raise conscious attention toward doing tasks and simultaneously academic achievement. Consequently, the highlights of "TBLT" argue that students can learn from the tasks they are involved in (Tale & Goodarzi, 2015). Over the last few decades, task-based approaches have been used in most countries to teach second and foreign languages to learners. In foreign language learning contexts where students have little exposure to the target language outside the classroom, TBLT can be specifically helpful (Jeon, 2005). However, task-based instruction is not widely followed as an educational approach to English language teaching in Iran (Riazi Ahmadsaraei & Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2022).

According to Nowroozzadeh et al. (2022), applying TBLT is effective enough and should be adapted to the Iranian educational context. Moreover, much of the work done in the area of TBLT has focused on the definitions of tasks, the role of tasks in second language acquisition (Ellis 2000; Skehan 1996), different task types (Skehan & Foster, 1999), task repetition, and task difficulty. However, there is little practical discussion of how language learners perceive task-based instruction. Additionally, over the years, a great deal of research has been carried out into learner variables that might affect the language learning process, such as nationality, age, gender, and motivation, but issues related to novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of language learning have not attracted the same attention. In contrast, language learners' perceptions surrounding the language learning process undeniably impact their learning.

A range of inhibitors have also been identified in classroom-based TBLT, including the need for teacher creativity and adaptability, student uncertainty concerning TBLT aims, participation issues, and learner progress in fluency rather than accuracy. Following the advent of TEL in language teaching and its consequences for the design and delivery of TBLT,

a number of inhibitors have been identified. Key areas that relate directly to TBLT principles include participation and group dynamics, negotiation of meaning during interaction and questions regarding focus on form components. These challenges can negatively affect online collaborative tasks in TBLT, and the need for a comprehensive framework for teaching language in TBLT has been put forward. Regarding the above-mentioned issues, the present study seeks to investigate novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes.

Identified benefits of TBLT in classroom contexts include a range of positives such as increased learner autonomy (Demir, 2008), increased learning skills (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004), higher fluency and complexity levels in students following a TBLT curriculum (Rahimpour, 2008), higher degrees of participation and student-teacher rapport (Ruso, 2007), and enhanced creativity and improved self-esteem and social skills (McDonough & Chaikitmongkol, 2007). Ellis (2009) details several TBLT benefits, including 'natural' learning, focus on meaning over form, motivational factors, learner focus and improved fluency.

Task-based learning helps students do this because it forces them to do something in class that they would do (and probably have done!) in their language. It replaces the "traditional" classroom with real-life situations that allow them to answer or solve real problems. Task-based teaching enables learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and develop their existing knowledge. TBL motivates students and promotes a student-centred approach, one of the language teaching principles. Regarding classroom-based TBLT, there have been debates about TBLT aspects, including the most effective framework approach, the nature of tasks and the suitability of TBLT for all contexts. The rapid growth in technology-enhanced learning has created a clear need to reassess the effectiveness of TBLT frameworks in technology-enhanced learning contexts with particular reference to the overarching principles of the approach. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes by formulating the following research questions:

- What are novice EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes?
- What are experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes?
- How are novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes compared?

## Literature review

### Previous Research Findings in Iran

Ghanbari and Ketabi (2011) conducted a research study evaluating the perceptions of Iranian pre-university teachers regarding the different components of this new curriculum, i.e., attitude,

methodology, and practice. The study's findings revealed that some stumbling blocks seriously affect the aims of this curriculum innovation to be fulfilled in Iran as an EFL context.

Hadi (2013) explored perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) among Iranian female learners. The results suggested a high level of understanding of TBLT concepts among most respondents. They also revealed a few negative views on TBLT implementation. Shabani and Ghasemi (2014) investigated the impact of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and content-based language teaching (CBLT) on the reading comprehension of intermediate Iranian ESP learners. The data analysis using independent samples t-test revealed that the subjects in the TBLT group performed better in reading comprehension post-test than the CBLT group.

Tabatabaei and Hadi (2011) sought to investigate Iranian EFL teachers' views on implementing TBLT and why they choose or avoid implementing TBLT. The study results showed that most participants understood TBLT concepts and principles very well, and there are just a few opposing views on applying this approach in English classrooms in Iran. This implied that EFL teachers could hope to apply TBLT in their classes successfully.

### Previous Research Findings around the World

Neyland (2011) investigated teachers' attitudes towards online learning in secondary schools in Tanzania. The result showed that teachers had positive attitudes towards using online learning strategy but did not integrate it into their teaching effectively.

Additionally, Singh and Thurman (2019) investigated teachers' attitudes toward the online learning approach. The consequence of the exploration questions showed that: (1) there was a measurably huge connection between educator experience and disposition toward online learning approach, (2) there was a genuinely significant correlation between instructor residency and mentality towards online learning approach, and (3) there was a measurably significant correlation between instructor age and demeanor toward online learning approach.

Bao and Du (2015) investigated the effects of TBLT on beginner adult learners of Chinese as a foreign language in Denmark in a language program. Results from classroom observations and interviews with learners showed that TBLT increased learner participation, created more opportunities for speaking, eased learners' anxiety, and enhanced enjoyment.

More positive results were shown in a recent study by Gonzalez-Lloret and Nielson (2015). This study evaluated a task-based Spanish course for a government agency in the USA. Results from three empirical studies conducted to investigate the effects of the course suggested that it was successful.

East (2012) investigated the perspectives of teachers who sought to incorporate the use of Tasks into the modern foreign language curriculum in high school contexts. Results from semi-structured interviews with 19 experienced teachers revealed that a quarter of the participants had minimal understanding of TBLT, while the rest had a relatively high knowledge of TBLT. Teachers who had experimented with tasks in their

classrooms over a more extended period reported that they were satisfied with students' performance of the tasks. In particular, they noted that the tasks enhanced their students' fluency and motivation.

McDonough and Chaikimongkol (2007) reported on an innovative task-based course for EFL students in a Thai university. The course replaced a traditional focus-on-forms course and was developed by the teachers involved in the program. Results showed that teachers and learners generally reacted positively to the course.

Jeon and Hahn (2006) explored teachers' perceptions of TBLT in a secondary school context. Data were collected using a questionnaire survey of 228 teachers at 38 different middle and high schools. Results showed that almost two-thirds of the teachers clearly understood TBLT concepts and supported TBLT concepts. In contrast, evaluations conducted by Carless (2009) in a Hong Kong secondary school context were purely qualitative interview studies. These two studies sought to explore teachers' perceptions of the suitability of TBLT in secondary schools.

Carless (2007) interviewed 11 school teachers and ten teacher educators for their views on the suitability of TBLT in secondary schools. The findings showed that the participants desired a "situated version of TBLT" that can balance TBLT and public examination, receptive and productive skills in TBLT, and the need for grammar instruction. The study suggests that a weak version of TBLT may be more appropriate in this secondary school context.

In a study in Taiwan, Lin and Wu (2012) investigated high school teachers' perceptions and understandings of TBLT and their views on the feasibility of TBLT. Data were collected from a survey of 136 teachers from 30 high schools and supplemented by interviews with four teachers. The Taiwanese high school teachers just possessed a basic understanding of TBLT concepts. In particular, they considered TBLT to be similar to CLT; thus, their practices reflected CLT's pedagogical principles and practices rather than TBLT's. However, although many teachers did not totally believe in the feasibility of TBLT, they held positive attitudes towards TBLT. They agreed that TBLT enhanced student motivation and encouraged communicative language use.

## Design

This study enjoyed a mixed methods design to provide answers to the posed research questions. It combined an interview and a questionnaire (explained below) as qualitative and quantitative phases, respectively. The quantitative phase of the research was followed by the interview, which was the qualitative phase of the study. "The purpose of using a blend of methods is to elaborate, enhance, illustrate, and clarify the results from one method (quantitative) with the results from another method (qualitative) to increase meaningfulness" (Greene, 2007, p. 41).

## Participants



The participants in this study were 40 male and female English teachers (20 Novice and 20 Experienced) aged 30-45 in language institutes in Kermanshah, Iran. The participants were selected following a convenience sampling procedure. They teach English at both intermediate and advanced levels.

### Instrument

A task-based language teaching questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to collect the data. To obtain data to address the predetermined questions, a survey was adapted from Jeon and Hahn's Teacher Questionnaire (2006), testing EFL teachers' perceptions of TBLT in terms of the TBLT tasks and TBLT concepts, views on TBLT implementation, and reasons for teachers' choosing or avoiding TBLT. The questionnaire was also piloted with 10 participants who were not among the main participants of this study in order to probe its validity. They were selected based on teacher availability to the researcher. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was 0.795, which confirmed its reliability.

The following instrument was a semi-structured interview to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards the SHAD platform in online classes. The researchers developed the interview items. Participants were asked about their beliefs regarding the SHAD platform in online classes. Additionally, to provide the validity and reliability of the interview, which included five questions, three domain experts confirmed the interview questions' validity and reliability. Moreover, the interview was conducted with five teachers not included in the study group before the study to check its validity and reliability. After the relevant questions in the interview were found to be clear and understandable, they were considered the main questions. The interview Questions are as follows:

1. How many online courses have you enrolled in? How many have you completed?
2. What were the benefits/pitfalls of SHAD platform in the online classes?
3. What hurdles have you faced using the SHAD platform during online courses?
4. How does the SHAD online learning platform differ from a traditional setting?
5. What advice would you give to an instructor planning to set up and instruct an online course using SHAD online learning platform?

### Procedure

The following steps were taken to achieve the purpose of this study:

The questionnaire was given to the participating teachers after the presentations in order to investigate their perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based

language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes to find out their understanding of TBLT, and finally, to find out whether or not they thought that they were able to implement TBLT in their classrooms. The questionnaire included statements representing the inhibitors to implementing TBLT for language learners and language teachers.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section contained demographic questions. The second section contained 22 questions in a five-item Likert scale form, which was designed to elicit the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with particular statements based on principles in different areas of TBLT. The questions used a five-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” The questionnaire aimed to identify any benefits, challenges, and obstacles the teachers perceived when applying this approach in their online classes. It was also intended to provide valuable data about the participating teachers’ understanding of the theoretical underpinnings and class implementation of TBLT. The questionnaire was included to provide data that assisted in answering the research questions.

Additionally, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview to collect the qualitative data. Participants were asked about their beliefs regarding SHAD platform in online classes. All interviews were conducted face to face. A voice recorder recorded the interviews, each lasting 15 to 20 minutes. Later on, they were transcribed, sorted, and coded. To analyze the interview phase, the participants also answered interview questions to obtain more insights into the SHAD platform in online classes, and they were analyzed qualitatively. The data were analyzed by interviewees using open and axial coding to get more insights from the teachers.

## **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 23). The data analysis was described according to the study's research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the questionnaire to probe novice and experienced EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes. To analyze the interview phase, the participants also answered interview questions to obtain more insights into SHAD platform in online classes, and they were analyzed qualitatively.

### **Analyzing the First Research Question**

The first research question posed in the present study was: "What are novice EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes?" This research question aimed to investigate teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching.



As mentioned above, the researchers used Jeon and Hahn's Teacher Questionnaire (2006) to gather the data. Table 1 below shows the mean score, Std. Deviation, and Std. Error Mean of task-based language teaching questionnaire.

**Table 1.**  
*Task-Based Language Teaching) Questionnaire (Novice Teachers)*

| Questionnaire Items  | Novice Teachers |                |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
|  | Mean            | Std. Deviation |
| 1) A task is communicative goal-directed.  | 3.10            | 1.447          |
| 2) A task involves a primary focus on meaning.                                       | 3.00            | 1.338          |
| 3) A task has a clearly defined outcome.   | 3.60            | 1.314          |
| 4) A task is any activity in which the learner uses the target language.             | 3.35            | 1.496          |
| 5) TBLT is consistent with communicative language teaching principles.               | 3.05            | 1.538          |
| 6) TBLT is based on the student-centered approach.                                   | 3.65            | 1.424          |
| 7) TBLT includes pre-task, during-task, and post-task.                               | 3.50            | 1.573          |
| 8) I have an interest in implementing TBLT.  | 3.70            | 1.380          |
| 9) TBLT provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote the use of the target language.     | 3.60            | 1.429          |
| 10) TBLT activates learners' needs and interests.                                    | 3.50            | 1.357          |
| 11) TBLT pursues the development of integrated skills.                               | 3.45            | 1.504          |
| 12) TBLT gives a psychological burden to a teacher as a facilitator.                 | 2.95            | 1.605          |
| 13) TBLT requires much preparation time compared to other approaches.                | 3.50            | 1.318          |
| 14) TBLT is proper for controlling classroom arrangements.                           | 3.65            | 1.348          |
| 15) TBLT materials should be meaningful and purposeful based on real-world contexts. | 3.35            | 1.309          |

Table 1 shows the mean score, Std. Deviation, and Std. Error Mean of task-based language teaching questionnaire.

**Table 2.**  
*Descriptive Statistics of Task-Based Language Teaching Questionnaire*

| Group           | N  | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-----------------|----|------|----------------|-----------------|
| Novice Teachers | 20 | 3.44 | 1.141          | 1.15            |

As it is clear from this Table, the Mean score of the items and Std. Deviation and Std. The error mean of task-based language teaching questionnaires for novice teachers is 3.44, 1.141, and 1.15, respectively.

**Analyzing the Second Research Question**

The second research question posed in the present study was:" What are experienced EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes? ". This research question aimed to probe experienced EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather the data.

Table 3 shows the mean score, Std. Deviation, and Std. Error Mean of task-based language teaching questionnaire of experienced teachers.

**Table 3.***Task-Based Language Teaching Questionnaire (Experienced Teachers)*

| Questionnaire Items  | Experienced Teachers |                |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
|  | Mean                 | Std. Deviation |
| 1) A task is a communicative goal-directed.  | 4.00                 | 1.170          |
| 2) A task involves a primary focus on meaning.                                       | 3.75                 | 1.410          |
| 3) A task has a clearly-defined outcome.   | 3.90                 | 1.252          |
| 4) A task is any activity in which the learner uses the target language.             | 3.95                 | 1.317          |
| 5) TBLT is consistent with communicative language teaching principles.               | 3.50                 | 1.433          |
| 6) TBLT is based on the student-centred approach.                                    | 4.20                 | 1.196          |
| 7) TBLT includes pre-task, during-task, and post-task.                               | 4.00                 | 1.414          |
| 8) I have an interest in implementing TBLT.  | 4.20                 | 1.105          |
| 9) TBLT provides a relaxed atmosphere to promote the use of the target language.     | 4.00                 | 1.298          |
| 10) TBLT activates learners' needs and interests.                                    | 3.65                 | 1.348          |
| 11) TBLT pursues the development of integrated skills.                               | 4.15                 | 1.182          |
| 12) TBLT gives a psychological burden to a teacher as a facilitator.                 | 4.00                 | 1.170          |
| 13) TBLT requires much preparation time compared to other approaches.                | 3.80                 | 1.152          |
| 14) TBLT is proper for controlling classroom arrangements.                           | 3.95                 | 1.146          |
| 15) TBLT materials should be meaningful and purposeful based on real-world contexts. | 3.80                 | 1.281          |

Table

Table 4 below shows the mean score of the items and Std. Deviation and Std. Error Mean of the task-based language teaching questionnaire of experienced teachers is 3.93, 1.121, and 1.07 respectively.

**Table 4.**  
*Descriptive Statistics of Task-Based Language Teaching Questionnaire*

| Group                   | N  | Mean | Std.<br>Deviation | Std.<br>Error<br>Mean |
|-------------------------|----|------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Experienced<br>Teachers | 20 | 3.93 | 1.121             | 1.07                  |

**Addressing the Third Research Question**

The third research question of the present study was: *How are novice and experienced EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes?* This research question aimed to assess the novice and experienced EFL teachers’ perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes. The researcher used the interview to gather the data.

The interview aimed to understand the participants’ perspectives and attitudes toward SHAD application regarding the implementation of task-based language teaching in online learning. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, all of the interviews were analyzed carefully. The analysis of data gathered from interviews produced primary responses related to the study's objectives. Participants were encouraged to answer all interview questions as honestly and accurately as possible and explain any items you had doubts about. The study examined relevant issues, such as what obstacles and benefits they believed they had experienced and what personal or cultural constraints affected their ability to benefit from technology.

This interview addressed English language teachers' views concerning online learning. In addition, it aimed to demonstrate their impressions about online learning. The questions were the ones mentioned above (section 10). The interview questions were as follows.

1. How many online courses have you enrolled in? How many have you completed?
2. What were the benefits of the SHAD platform in the online classes? Pitfalls?
3. What hurdles have you faced using the SHAD platform during the online course?
4. How does the online learning community differ from a traditional setting?

5. What advice would you give to an instructor planning to set up and instruct an online course?

**Below are the answers from some of the interviewees.**

*It seems that SHAD online education system can create interactivity through its multimedia properties. Additionally, the task-based language teaching SHAD online education system is useful in improving students' listening abilities. The online setting is just here, which is essential for learning nowadays. The education should be integrated with online learning tools. The motivation towards learning for students would be bigger. It is my primary motivation, not my desire to be part of the curriculum. (Experienced Teacher Participant).*

*Online courses today is beneficial. Last year, I've started using the new computers. It was pretty hard at first because I was not used to moving things around, I saw how fascinating they were, so I've spent a couple of weeks playing around with them after school to learn how to use it properly (Novice Teacher Participant).*

The teachers involved in online courses actively proposed that increased cooperation and support from technological tools are essential and could help those skeptical about technological tools overcome their doubts and try new teaching methods.

*At least, task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system will give EFL students access to some services they lack in the classroom. One of those important services is the multimedia. Generally, I found the online courses useful because I improved my teaching method, and they were delightful and effective for all the students and me. If I describe it in percentages, I can say that it was 70% or 80% useful and enjoyable (Novice Teacher Participant).*

The teachers who use the SHAD online education system in online learning actively proposed that increased cooperation and support from technological tools are essential and could help those skeptical about technological tools overcome their doubts and try out new teaching methods. One of them said that the lack of experience and a sense of comfort often prevents some teachers, particularly older ones, from using technology. Teacher participants pointed out that schools new to online education could implement a situation, rewarding those teachers who used technological tools effectively.

*Most students complain about bringing heavy laptops and dictionaries to EFL classrooms. The situation regarding task-based language teaching is completely different in the SHAD online education system. I think being portable is a valuable feature of the SHAD online education system. There are advantages and disadvantages of utilizing internet technology to teach English, but it's worth it as the teachers feel comfortable using technological tools in online teaching. I believe that teachers feel comfortable using technological tools as long as they work properly and are up to date (Experienced Teacher Participant).*

This would ensure that investments are not wasted and teachers are encouraged to leave their comfort zones. They stressed the importance of online programs. They said that for technology-based learning to work, all connections must work properly, and technology has to be

up to date. They supported that idea by saying that technology should be taken care of and invested in so it will not fail at critical moments.

*I thought one important challenge would be gaining access to appropriate and well-designed language learning activities. The SHAD online education system provides Easy access via task-based language teaching. I believe using online programs as an online teaching method should replace all other teaching methods. Like any other method, it is only fun as long as it is not too frequent. Frequent use of technological tools can harm the eyes and concentration span. Considering the health of students and teachers, technology should be limited and only used when it is valuable and rewarding. While most learners are relatively well equipped with technological tools, some teachers feel that more could be added to make work with technology easier (Novice Teacher Participant).*

Some teachers who actively take online courses said that in addition to the advantages of teaching students how to use the Internet and various information sources, it is also vital to emphasize critical thinking. As valuable as the Internet can be, there are also disadvantages and harmful materials that students should be able to recognize to keep themselves safe. Many teachers pointed out that while technology is fun and useful, it should be used in moderation.

*I think teachers must compare the time they spend preparing a task to the time it takes the students to complete the task in class, and if they find that hours of work culminate in mere minutes of class time, they often decide not to take on the task. On the other hand, once prepared, the tasks can be used repeatedly, saving the teachers trouble in the future (Novice Teacher Participant).*

Teachers said that, although time-consuming, they still try to create as many activities as possible. Some teachers also said that the online program has made many preparatory activities much easier for both them and their students. For example, distributing home tasks, independent work, and projects and giving feedback is much more immediate now than when all this had to be done in class.

*I am not familiar enough with the techniques and approaches that can be adapted to use the SHAD online education system for language learning. I need to know the practical and theoretical basis of using task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system for language teaching (Experienced Teacher Participant).*

*Thanks to various online programs and activities, we are much more invested in the lessons. Technology has certainly made students more active and cooperative. It is due to natural excitement about something new and interesting (Novice Participant).*

The main argument was that a good teacher can teach with whatever tools they have at hand, and if a student is not willing to learn, it positively affects results.

*The online program has simplified teachers' and students' work by offering quicker and simpler solutions than previously used options. I believe that online programs like SHAD can help improve student motivation due to the interest that students seem to have in technology-based tasks. Teachers used technological tools to make the lessons more interesting and fun and as a special reward for the students (Experienced Teacher Participant).*



Teachers described the online program as a fast, new, and interesting tool. Teachers purposefully use an online program as a teaching tool because of its resources. Most teachers did not mention technology's role as a regular teaching tool equivalent to other teaching methods. Teachers mentioned using technology because it helps simplify and complement other teaching methods. They did not see technological tools as something with independent value but rather as an assisting tool in lessons.

The findings indicate that participants are generally positive about how task-based language teaching in the SHAD program helps them work effectively with other people. In addition, participants who are positive about how online program helps them work with others have higher learning goals. This extends to identified regulation, intrinsic motivation, performance and teachers' engagement. Furthermore, positive attitudes to the role the SHAD program is expected to play in the students' futures can be noted. These positive attitudes are positively associated with learning goals. Similarly, the perception of a learning focus is positively related to the importance of the efficiency of the SHAD program in the future.

## Discussion

The present study was an attempt to investigate the novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes. According to the results of this study, the participants hold positive views regarding using computers to help them work effectively with other people. In addition, participants seem to have higher learning goals. EFL teachers and students had positive attitudes towards SHAD, the online education system, as they believe that the SHAD online education system constitutes a more relaxed and stress-free atmosphere.

In this respect, the present study's findings align with those of Hung (2017), who found that online teaching in English classes develops students' academic performance in general. This study is also consistent with studies conducted in Turkey that investigated applying online teaching in the Turkish EFL context (Ekmekci, 2017). The findings indicated that those students who studied under the new model of teaching and learning via technological tools outperformed those who studied under the traditional teaching method.

The current results also follow a study conducted by Aşıksoy (2018), who investigated the ELT students' attitudes towards using Web 2.0 tools to improve their language skills and identified the Web 2.0 tools used by the students. The study found that students had a positive attitude toward the use of Web 2.0 tools.

The present study's findings seem to align with Seraji, Ziabari, and Rokni's (2017) work, which aimed to seek out new information to find the relationship among teachers' tenure, age, educational level, experience, and teachers' attitudes toward technology. The study aimed to investigate the attitude towards technology among teachers working in several institutes in Mazandaran. One hundred teachers, 38 males and 62 females, aged

22 to 50 and 20 to 42, completed a survey. The non-parametric Spearman Rank-Order Correlation was used to find the relationship between the variables. The result of the research questions showed that: (1) there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher experience and attitude toward technology, (2) there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher tenure and attitude toward technology, and (3) there was a statistically significant relationship between teacher age and attitude toward technology.

Ndibalema (2014) investigated teachers' attitudes towards using ICT as a pedagogical tool in secondary schools in Tanzania. The present findings seem to confirm his findings on a better understanding of ICT as a pedagogical tool. They also found that teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of ICT as a pedagogical tool

Guariento and Morley (2001) believed one should be careful about using technological tools in language classes as they can demotivate novice language learners. As Guariento and Morley (2001) did not focus on language learners at other proficiency learners, the current study's findings can conclude by stating that more proficient language learners can use technological tools.

## Conclusion

This study sought to explore the novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of the inhibitors to implementing task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes. The statistical analysis of the questionnaires revealed that most novice and experienced teachers knew the role and contribution of task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system. The findings showed that most teachers and students were very positive toward using task-based language teaching in SHAD online education system.

The present research concluded that the participants hold a positive attitude toward task-based language teaching in SHAD. They also manifest a positive sign that indicates their preparedness to actively engage in any technological tools incorporation process if circumstances are favorable; it is a promising asset that should pave the way for the incorporation of educational technologies in a more effective way that leads to their eventual normalization.

However, several barriers need to be addressed first. One of the overarching issues is the absence of effective technological tools training, as although informants stated their answers revealed that they had received some training, their training is, at best, insufficient. Most of the time, the training is technical and does not serve its primary purpose: to help teachers incorporate educational technologies into their practices.

Additionally, the English language department lacks even the basic forms of technology in the image of a permanent internet connection and a sufficient number of data projectors, needless to talk about language laboratories without which no online education system incorporation can occur. Finally, providing the needed online education

system and technical training to teachers can never be enough, as introducing an online education system cannot be effective in achieving the desired positive impact unless significant changes are made at all levels, including teaching methods, stakeholders' roles, and, most importantly, mindsets and mentalities. Using technology is beneficial because students can listen to and discuss the topic in a friendly situation where the learners can use the target language. The findings showed that technological tools may raise students' language achievement.

In line with this factor, it can be argued that one of the staple inhibitors in the implementation of task-based language teaching in Iranian online SHAD classes is the problems that EFL teachers have in providing appropriate tasks and assessing the L2 learners' abilities. This problem may be rooted in the fact that though task-based assessment has been strongly advocated in the literature due to its abundant advantages on the board, teachers have not practiced much. For example, designing, implementing, and evaluating tasks is not a simple undertaking. Task-based assessments are relatively difficult to produce and relatively time-consuming to administer. In addition, it has been demonstrated that teachers need to specify the purpose, select the appropriate task, develop the scoring criteria, supervise the process, and finally score the product or performance.

Regarding the inhibitors, the findings indicated that teachers' knowledge about implementing task-based language teaching is essential. If teachers are not familiar with task-based language teaching, they cannot design tasks or carry out tasks in the online SHAD classes fully or effectively. Moreover, according to the findings, experienced teachers know how to select appropriate activities for students at different levels, motivate students, and monitor them during the lesson. If teachers are experienced, they will apply their professional skills to inspire the learners. What is more, teachers' English proficiency can help them fulfil the pedagogical requirements for the implementation of task-based language teaching. Teachers with high levels of English proficiency will set a good example for students to follow. On the other hand, teachers with low English proficiency will cope with difficulty in carrying out instructions, especially in implementing task-based language teaching.

Another factor that the teachers think also affects their implementation is teachers' training. A teacher who was taught by task-based language teaching at online courses face fewer problems in their class compared to the ones who were not. Also, the online training courses help teachers increase their knowledge about task-based language teaching and pedagogy implementation. In order to support the implementation of task-based language teaching in the online SHAD classes, the results also revealed that being familiar with technology is necessary. Task-based language teaching requires students to interact with each other by using the target language. If the allotted time is insufficient, one of the feasible ways the principal value of this research study is to emphasize the tremendous and important role of task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system

in enhancing EFL learners' education. In addition, it tries to help them express their ideas and communicate in the target language. Therefore, using online teaching will improve the value of production courses. The findings of this study will be highly valuable for teachers and instructors to consider the usefulness of task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system and invest more in designing and applying them for this purpose.

The findings may also help materials developers and syllabus designers consider the importance of the online education system in online activities while planning textbooks and materials. Moreover, the conclusions underline the usefulness of this research in the educational process at a practical level. The reported findings could help those who create or manage specific learning systems since they provide important information on whether students accept online teaching.

Finally, this research provides valuable insights into task-based language teaching in the SHAD online education system, but the topic is vast and requires keeping the door open for further research. Hence, hopefully, this research will pave the way for further investigations.

## References

- Aşıksoy, G. (2018). ELT students' attitudes and awareness towards the use of Web 2.0 technologies for language learning. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 14(2), 240-251.
- Bao, R., & Du, X. (2015). Implementation of task-based language teaching in Chinese as a foreign language: Benefits and challenges. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 28(3), 291-310.
- Bonk, C. J., & Zhang, K. (2006). Introducing the R2D2 model: Online learning for the diverse learners of this world. *Distance education*, 27(2), 249-264.
- Carless, D. R. (2009). Revisiting the TBLT versus PPP debate: Voices from Hong Kong. *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching*.
- Demir, A. Y. Ş. E. G. Ü. L. (2008). The influence of task-based reading activities on EFL learners' attitude and learning outcomes from the students' perspective. *Unpublished MA Thesis. Adana: Çukurova University*
- Ekmekci, E. (2017). The flipped writing classroom in Turkish EFL context: A comparative study on a new model. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education*, 18(2), 151-167.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Erlam, R., & Tolosa, C. (2022). *Pedagogical realities of implementing task-based language teaching*. John Benjamins.
- Ghanbari, B., & Ketabi, S. (2011). Practicing a change in an Iranian EFL curriculum: From Ivory tower to reality. *Iranian EFL Journal*, 7(6), 9-13.

- Gilakjani, A. P. (2022). Factors Contributing to Teachers' Use of Computer Technology in the Classroom. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 1(3), 262-267.
- Greene, J. C. (2007). *Mixed methods in social inquiry* (Vol. 9). John Wiley & Sons.
- Guariento, W., & Morley, J. (2001). Text and task authenticity in the EFL classroom. *ELT Journal*, 55(4), 347-353.
- Hadi, A. (2013). Perceptions of Task-Based Language Teaching: A Study of Iranian EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 6(1), 103-111.
- Harris, J. (2018). Responding to the critics: Implementation of TBLT in Japan. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 139-148.
- Hung, H. T. (2017). Clickers in the flipped classroom: Bring your own device (BYOD) to promote student learning. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 25(8), 983-995.
- Jeon, I. J. (2005). An analysis of task-based materials and performance: Focused on Korean high school English textbooks. *ENGLISH TEACHING* 60(2), 87-109.
- Jeon, I. J., & Hahn, J. W. (2006). Exploring EFL teachers' perceptions of task-based language teaching: A case study of Korean secondary school classroom practice. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8(1), 123-143.
- Leaver, B. L., & Kaplan, M. A. (2004). Task-based instruction in US government Slavic language programs. *Task-based instruction in foreign language education: Practices and Programs*, 47-66.
- Li, G., & Wang, Y. (2021). Breaking the sample complexity barrier to regret-optimal model free reinforcement learning. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, 34, 17762-17776.
- McDonough, K., & Chaikitmongkol, W. (2007). Teachers' and learners' reactions to a task-based EFL course in Thailand. *Tesol Quarterly*, 41(1), 107-132.
- Moore, P. J. (2018). Task-based language teaching (TBLT). *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching*, 1-7.
- Naseri, S., & Motallebzadeh, K. (2016). Podcasts: a factor to improve Iranian EFL learner's self-regulation ability and use of technology. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 19(2), 328-339.
- Ndibalema, P. (2014). Teachers' attitudes towards the use of information communication technology (ICT) as a pedagogical tool in secondary schools in Tanzania: The Case of Kondoa District.
- Nowroozzadeh, N., Bayat, A., & Mehrpooya, A. (2022). Task-Based Language Teaching Vs. Conventional Language Teaching: The Case of News Story Writing in EFL Context. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 10(40), 123-132.
- Neyland, E. (2011). Integrating online learning in NSW secondary schools: Three schools' perspectives on ICT adoption. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 27(1).

- Obari, H., & Lambacher, S. (2015, August). Successful EFL teaching using mobile technologies in a flipped classroom. In *Critical CALL—Proceedings of the 2015 EUROCALL Conference, Padova, Italy* (pp. 433-438). Research-publishing.
- Peng, Y., & Pyper, J. S. (2021). Finding success with pedagogical innovation: A case from CSL teachers' experiences with TBLT. *Language Teaching Research*, 25(4), 633-655.
- Rahimpour, M. (2008). Implementation of task-based approaches to language teaching.
- Riazi Ahmadsaraei, M., & Pourhosein Gilakjani, A. (2022). Exploring the effect of task-based language teaching on reading comprehension: Evidence from Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 10(3), 517-536.
- Tale, S. M., & Goodarzi, A. (2015). The impacts of task-based teaching on grammar learning by Iranian first grade high school students. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 4(4), 144-153.
- Ruso, N. (2007). The influence of task-based learning on EFL classrooms, <[http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/pta\\_February\\_2007\\_tr.pdf](http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/pta_February_2007_tr.pdf)> Accessed: Jan 8, 2019.
- Scherer, R., Siddiq, F., & Tondeur, J. (2019). The technology acceptance model (TAM): A meta-analytic structural equation modeling approach to explaining teachers' adoption of digital technology in education. *Computers & Education*, 128, 13-35.
- Seifert, K., & Sutton, R. (2009). *Educational psychology*. Kelvin Seifert.
- Seraji, N. E., Ziabari, R. S., & Rokni, S. J. A. (2017). Teacher's attitudes towards educational technology in English language institutes. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(2), 176-185.
- Shabani, M. B., & Ghasemi, A. (2014). The effect of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and content-based language teaching (CBLT) on the Iranian intermediate ESP learners' reading comprehension. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1713-1721.
- Skehan, P. (1996). A framework for the implementation of task-based instruction. *Applied linguistics*, 17(1), 38-62.
- Singh, V., & Thurman, A. (2019). How many ways can we define online learning? A systematic literature review of definitions of online learning (1988-2018). *American Journal of Distance Education*, 33(4), 289-306.
- Tabatabaei, O., & Hadi, A. (2011). Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of task-based language pedagogy. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 1(2), 1-9.